DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 463 263 SP 040 555

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TITLE Negotiating the Standards Maze: A Model for Teacher Education Programs. White Paper.

PUB DATE 2002-02-25

NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (54th, New York, NY, February 23-26, 2002).

PUB TYPE Opinion Papers (120) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.

DESCRIPTORS *Academic Standards; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; National Standards; *Preservice Teacher Education; State Standards; *Teacher Competencies; Teaching Skills

IDENTIFIERS National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Educ; Performance Indicators; Subject Content Knowledge; University of Central Florida

ABSTRACT

This paper describes one college faculty member's experiences coordinating departmental preparations for a 5-year, continuing program approval/accreditation visit from the Florida Department of Education (FDOE), the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and the Florida Board of Regents. It notes that in addition to the global FDOE and NCATE standards for initial or continuing program approval/accreditation, a teacher preparation program must attend to several specific standards: the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices; Performance Indicators for Effective Teachers; Florida Professional Education Competencies; Florida-adopted subject area competencies; subject matter content standards for Florida teachers; Sunshine State Standards; Florida Performance Standards for Teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages; NCATE constituents; International Society for Technology in Education National Educational Technology Standards; conceptual framework; Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium core standards; and National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The college chose to use the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices as a baseline, developing a crosswalk of all applicable standards against the accomplished practices. The crosswalk is included in a table. (Contains 10 references.) (SM)

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ED 463 263

Negotiating the Standards Maze: A Model for Teacher Education Programs

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White Paper

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Presented at AACTE 54th Annual Meeting in New York, NY on February 25, 2002, by

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WHITE PAPER
NEGOTIATING THE STANDARDS MAZE: A MODEL FOR TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Dr. Lance J. Tomei

When hired in July 2000 as Assistant to the Chair, Department of Instructional Programs and Educational Leadership (IPEL) in the College of Education at the University of Central Florida, I was assigned the primary duty of coordinating departmental preparations for a five-year, continuing program approval/accreditation visit from the Florida Department of Education (FDOE), the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and the Florida Board of Regents (BOR). I soon learned that the focus of that multi-agency visit, scheduled for early November 2000, would be our programs' compliance with FDOE and NCATE standards and a host of related standards, competencies, and professional practices. As I worked to become familiar with all applicable guidelines, I quickly recognized the complexity of the total set of standards that impact on each teacher education program. The size of our department further compounded the task of monitoring and managing the complex array of applicable standards and competencies. With 55 full-time and over 30 part-time faculty members, IPEL housed undergraduate and/or graduate programs in Art Education, Early Childhood Education, Educational Leadership, Elementary Education, English/Language Arts Education, Foreign Language Education, Math Education, Music Education, Reading Education, Science Education, Social Science Education, and Vocational Education and Industry Training.

My immediate challenge was to help this large, complex department prepare to demonstrate compliance with a myriad of equally complex, dynamic, and separate yet highly interdependent and occasionally redundant standards. Fortunately, I was allowed to virtually dedicate myself to that pursuit, and doing so certainly was a full-time task. Our program coordinators, however, didn't have that luxury. They, of course, had to prepare for this critical

visit while continuing to meet the rigorous demands of their teaching, advising, research, scholarship, and service responsibilities.

As I became more knowledgeable about the various standards, I concluded that a well-organized, systematic perspective was needed to help our faculty members monitor and manage program compliance with all applicable standards and competencies. In theory, a teacher needs expertise in two general domains: pedagogy and subject matter content. That would suggest two categories of standards for teacher education programs: one set generic to all pre-service teachers and a second set specific to each content area representing a particular certification coverage or endorsement. In fact, individuals wishing to become certified teachers in Florida must pass two separate components of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE): the Professional Education sub-test, which tests generic knowledge applicable to all teachers, and the Subject Area Examination, which is specific to each certification category. The design of Florida's state certification testing seems to reinforce the theory that two sets of standards should suffice.

In practice, however, the maze of applicable standards for any given program is far more complex than theory would suggest. In addition to the "global" FDOE and NCATE standards for initial or continuing program approval/accreditation, a teacher preparation program must attend to the following specific standards:

- **THE FLORIDA EDUCATOR ACCOMPLISHED PRACTICES.** Adopted by the State Board of Education on November 7, 1996, the 12 Florida Educator Accomplished Practices are now viewed by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) as the main criteria for assessing teacher performance at the *pre-professional*, *professional*, and *accomplished* educator levels. Categories of the 12 Accomplished Practices are: assessment, communication, continuous improvement, critical thinking, diversity, ethics, human development and learning, knowledge of subject matter, learning environments, planning, role of the teacher, and technology.

- **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHERS (Previously known as Generic Competencies):** Historically, the Florida legislature has enacted generic competencies, which, until summer 2000, were contained in Florida Statute 231.17(5). These competencies were applicable to all certified teachers, regardless of certification area. As of May 2000, there were a total of 20 generic competencies contained in Florida Statutes. Educate 2000 (Educators Developing Unequaled Competence Act: Teaching Excellence 2000), signed into state law on June 15, 2000, revised, renamed, and relocated these competencies. They are now contained in Florida Statute 231.002 in the form of 16 performance indicators for effective educators.
- **FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES (also referred to as Florida Essential Teaching Competencies or Florida Essential Generic Teaching Competencies).** Applicable to all certified teachers, these competencies represent the FDOE's interpretation and translation of the former, legislated generic competencies. They are contained in Section 00 of Competencies and Skills Required for Teacher Certification in Florida, Sixth Edition, published by FDOE in 1999. This set of competencies is significantly more detailed than the generic competencies from which they are derived. The Professional Education Sub-test of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination is currently based on this set of 30 major competencies, each with two to seven detailed "sub-competencies."
- **FLORIDA-ADOPTED SUBJECT AREA COMPETENCIES.** These competencies are specific to each certification area. They are contained in Sections 01 through 90 of the FDOE publication, Competencies and Skills Required for Teacher Certification in Florida, Sixth Edition. These competencies are currently the basis for the Subject Area Examination component of the FTCE for each certification coverage area.
- **SUBJECT MATTER CONTENT STANDARDS FOR FLORIDA TEACHERS.** Established by the Florida Education Standards Commission and published by FDOE in January 2000, these standards replace Florida-adopted Subject Area Competencies for freshmen enrolled fall 2000 and beyond. The initial set of these new standards included the

following certification coverage areas: Art (PreK-12), Biology (6-12), Chemistry (6-12), Comprehensive Social Sciences (6-12), Earth/Space Science (6-12), Economics (6-12) Elementary Education (no grades specified), English Language Arts (6-12), Foreign Languages (PreK-12), Geography (6-12), Health (PreK-12), History (6-12), Mathematics (6-12), Music (PreK-12), Physical Education (PreK-8), Physical Education (6-12), Physics (6-12), Political Science (6-12), Psychology (6-12), and Sociology (6-12). Subject Matter Content Standards have also been drafted, but not yet approved, for Early Childhood Education/School Readiness. Certification areas for which Subject Matter Content Standards have not yet been written and/or approved will continue to use Florida-adopted Subject Area Competencies as their subject-specific standards.

- **SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS.** Approved by the State Board of Education in 1996, the Sunshine State Standards provide state expectations for PreK-12 student achievement in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Dance, Music, Theater, Visual Arts, Foreign Languages, Health, and Physical Education. These standards are divided into four separate grade clusters (PreK-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12). Additionally, Grade Level Expectations have been established for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. While these standards address knowledge and skills applicable to PreK-12 students, 1999 legislation directed that certified teachers "demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter that is aligned with the subject knowledge and skills specified in the Sunshine State Standards." While that legislated mandate was superseded by Teacher Qualities enacted in Educate 2000, there is little doubt that the legislature and FDOE desire and expect subject-specific teacher certification standards to correlate appropriately with the Sunshine State Standards, and clearly this must be viewed as a "best practice."
- **FLORIDA PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES.** These 25 ESOL Performance Standards are used to gauge teachers' ability to work effectively with Limited English Proficient students. The standards are of major importance to those programs (Pre-K/Primary, Elementary

Education, English/Language Arts, and Exceptional Education) which are now required to include full ESOL endorsement as a program element for students entering fall 2000 and beyond.

- **NCATE CONSTITUENTS.** For the following program areas, NCATE's Specialty Areas Studies Board has approved national guidelines developed by professional associations that are constituent members of NCATE:
  - **Computing Technology Education:** International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)
  - **Early Childhood Education:** National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
  - **Educational Communications & Technology Specialists:** Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT)
  - **Educational Leadership:** Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC)
  - **English Language Arts Education:** National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
  - **Elementary Education:** Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI)
  - **Health Education:** American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD)/American Association for Health Education (AAHE)
  - **Mathematics Education:** National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)
  - **Middle Level Education:** National Middle School Association (NMSA)
  - **Physical Education:** American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AAHPERD)/National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE)
  - **Reading Education:** International Reading Association (IRA)
  - **School Library Media Specialist:** American Library Association (ALA)
  - **School Psychology:** National Association of School Psychology (NASP)
  - **Science Education:** National Science Teachers Association (NSTA)
  - **Social Studies Education:** National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)
  - **Special Education:** Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

- **Technology Education:** International Technology Education Association/Council on Technology Teacher Education (ITEA/CTTE)

- **INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION (ISTE) NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS.** Adopted by NCATE, these standards represent educational technology foundations applicable to all teachers and may be effectively used to assess program compliance with technology standards contained in the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices, legislated Performance Indicators for Effective Teachers, and Florida Professional Education Competencies.
- **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.** Teacher preparation programs are expected to operate in accordance with a locally established conceptual framework. The University of Central Florida College of Education's conceptual framework is that of reflective practice. This conceptual framework provides a theoretical foundation for the program. Evidence that the conceptual framework is imbedded throughout the program is yet another standard to which programs must adhere.

In addition to the standards listed above, which impact directly on the University of Central Florida's teacher education programs, the following standards are also relevant:

- **INTERSTATE NEW TEACHER ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT CONSORTIUM (INTASC) CORE STANDARDS.** INTASC is a consortium of state education agencies, higher education institutions, and national educational organizations dedicated to the reform of the education, licensing, and on-going professional development of teachers. The consortium's mission is to promote standards-based reform through the development of model standards and assessments for beginning teachers. INTASC Core Standards for licensing teachers represent those principles that should be present in all teaching regardless of the subject or grade-level taught, and they serve as a framework for the systemic reform of teacher preparation and professional development. While compliance with these standards is not currently a FDOE indicator used in program evaluation and approval, best professional practices warrant attention to these standards in teacher education programs. Worth noting is

the fact that these standards are very compatible with the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices, as will be evident later in this paper.

- **NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS (NBPTS).** NBPTS works to strengthen the teaching profession and to improve student learning in America's schools, establishes high standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do, and is continuing development of a system of advanced, voluntary certification for teachers. These standards are of particular interest for advanced teacher education programs.

In addition to the above list of directly and tangentially applicable standards, State Board of Education/FDOE rules mandate across-the-board general education and professional education requirements for all teacher preparation programs. An example is the recent rule change that requires all teacher preparation programs to increase common program prerequisites in liberal arts and sciences, to add content reading to the curriculum, and to make other specified curricular changes related to assessment, human development, and other topics. While those requirements are not the focus of this paper, it is important to note that they do serve to compound the challenge faced by college administrators, program coordinators, and other faculty members to ensure that each program meets all requirements.

As I reflected on all of the applicable standards and competencies, I concluded that the key to designing a systematic perspective would be establishing a functional baseline against which all of the standards could be mapped. As a part of that deliberation, I noted with interest that the FDOE standards for continuing program approval focused heavily on the 12 Florida Educator Accomplished Practices. This observation led me to conclude that for our programs a systematic perspective of applicable standards could, and probably should, use the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices as a baseline. With that in mind, I developed a crosswalk of all applicable standards against the Accomplished Practices. Since my focus was on beginning teacher preparation programs (i.e., those leading to initial certification), pre-professional level indicators were used for the Accomplished Practices. To keep the crosswalk as simple as

possible while ensuring that it was both comprehensive and functional, I selected a four-column design. Column one consisted of the 12 Florida Educator Accomplished Practices. Column two housed the legislated generic competencies. This column was later updated to reflect the new Performance Indicators for Teacher Effectiveness in place of the earlier set of legislated generic competencies.

Column three contained the Florida Professional Education Competencies. Although these were derived from the legislated generic competencies, I listed them separately because 1999 additions and revisions to the generic competencies had not been incorporated into the Florida Professional Education Competencies and because the FDOE competencies represented a substantial expansion of the legislated generic competencies in both complexity and level of detail. I felt this justified separate consideration. Educate 2000's impact on generic competencies and the continued use of the FDOE competencies as the basis for FTCE testing suggest the importance of continuing to ensure that these current FDOE competencies are closely monitored in program design and management unless and until that set of standards is revised or replaced.

All other applicable standards were reflected in column four. Many of these additional standards were not listed in detail since they vary by specific program. Rather their general relationship to the 12 Florida Educator Accomplished Practices was mapped.

In compiling the resultant crosswalk, I reflected at length about how the various competencies and standards relate to the Accomplished Practices. This was an admittedly subjective process and required frequent interpretation and extrapolation of often concisely worded standards and competencies. When making such subjective judgements on relationships among standards, I drew on my personal experiences as a K-12 classroom teacher and on my personal theories about teaching and learning. In many cases, I determined that a given standard was related to more than one Accomplished Practice. My crosswalk reflects this. For example, it was my judgement that Performance Indicator for Effective Teachers I (Use teaching and learning strategies that include consideration of each student's learning styles, needs, and

background.) applied not only to Accomplished Practice 5 (Diversity), but also to Accomplished Practices 7 (Human Development and Learning), 9 (Learning Environments), and 10 (Planning). I made equally subjective calls regarding when NOT to indicate relationships. These subjective decisions to reflect or not reflect relationships among standards were based on my personal perception of the directness and strength of those relationships, and on my desire to keep the crosswalk simple enough to be of practical as well as conceptual value to our faculty.

The result of this crosswalk is depicted in Table 1. Shortly after completing this project, I learned that Florida's Education Standards Commission had performed a similar crosswalk in which they examined relationships among the Accomplished Practices, Blueprint 2000 Standards, Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (prior to 1998 legislation), INTASC Core Standards Principles as well as standards from six other states (California, Connecticut, Kentucky, Louisiana, Ohio, and Texas). Underlined items in columns three and four of Table 1 represent the relationships identified in the Education Standards Commission's crosswalk, all of which were captured in my crosswalk as well.

Once this crosswalk was completed, I compiled a desk-reference packet which included the crosswalk, a brief description of each of the applicable standards and competencies, publication or Web site references for each set of standards, detailed listings of all standards applicable to all programs, and a listing of NCATE constituents by program. At a departmental retreat, I briefed our entire faculty on the standards and the crosswalk, and I provided each faculty member with a copy of the desk-reference packet. Throughout our department, we now have a common system in place for self-evaluation of program compliance with applicable standards and competencies, all of which are viewed as related to the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices. To enhance individual program management, our course objectives are correlated to all applicable standards and competencies, and this is reflected in our course syllabi. A tailored matrix has been developed to capture and compile these data for all required courses within each program. These program-specific matrices allow program coordinators and faculty members to monitor

each program to ensure that all applicable standards and competencies are adequately addressed in our curriculum.

Additionally, our portfolio requirements and final internship summative evaluations are keyed to the 12 Accomplished Practices. As our students approach the end of their programs of study, we use these summative assessment tools to evaluate each prospective graduate's proficiency at the pre-professional level in all 12 Florida Educator Accomplished Practices. We see a clear potential to extend this system further into the assessment domain--and a clear need to do so. With the NCATE and FDOE transition to performance based assessment, it has become essential to develop a means of adequate and ongoing student performance assessment, keyed to all applicable standards and competencies, as students progress through teacher education programs. The above-described systematic approach to monitoring and managing programs can be easily modified to incorporate standards-based performance assessment. The correlation of standards to course objectives must be extended to incorporate course learning activities and assessments. The crosswalk could facilitate this correlation of learning activities and assessment to standards by showing linkages to the Accomplished Practices and then "branching out" to other standards and competencies tied to those Accomplished Practices in the crosswalk. Such an expanded application of the crosswalk to provide a systematic approach to standards-based performance assessment would be a valuable tool in demonstrating program compliance with new FDOE and NCATE program standards and would also be a potential aid in Title II and other accountability reporting. Perhaps most importantly, it would provide an excellent and timely means of tracking and appropriately reacting to students' acquisition of appropriate skills and knowledge as they progress through teacher education programs.

While this paper has focused on a model specific to teacher education programs in Florida, many of the above-cited standards (e.g., NCATE, INTASC, ISTE) are national in scope and thus are applicable to teacher education programs in many states. Others, such as the ESOL standards cited above, while specific to Florida, are certainly representative of a national need. Certainly many of the Florida-specific standards cited in this paper have parallel standards in

most other states. This model can easily be adapted and applied to other locales, so long as an appropriate set of standards can be identified to serve as the baseline against which all other standards and competencies can be crosswalked. The INTASC Core Standards Principles, for example, would serve as an excellent, nationally applicable baseline.

Our department's experiences leading up to and during the five-year program re-approval/ re-accreditation visit, as well as during ongoing program management, have suggested that a systematic and integrated perspective of applicable standards and competencies is an invaluable tool for monitoring, managing, and self-evaluating teacher education programs. Using the 12 Florida Educator Accomplished Practices as the baseline for this integrated perspective appears to be a well-founded and effective design for such an integrated system in Florida, and it seems likely that a similar design would have great utility in any locale facing challenges similar to those in Florida. This model has served our programs and, more importantly, our students, very well. We expect that its continued use, and its continued extension into the performance assessment arena, will help ensure our teacher education programs stay current with changing standards and remain highly responsive to the needs of our students.

Table 1

Crosswalk of Teacher Education Program Standards and Competencies against The Florida Educator Accomplished Practices

Florida Accomplished Practices	Generic Competencies (FS 231.17(5))	Professional Education Competencies*	Other Competencies/Standards*
1. Assessment	D, G, H, O	9, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26	INTASC CS P3, P8 Reflective Practitioner
2. Communication	A, B	15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22	INTASC CS P6 Reflective Practitioner
3. Continuous Improvement	B		INTASC CS P9 **Reflective Practitioner** National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
4. Critical Thinking	C	19	INTASC CS P4 Reflective Practitioner
5. Diversity	F, I	1, 2, 30	ESOL Standards INTASC CS P3, P6, P7 Reflective Practitioner
6. Ethics	J	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 29	INTASC CS P9 Reflective Practitioner
7. Human Development and Learning	D, E, F, H, I	1, 28, 30	INTASC CS P1, P2, P7 Reflective Practitioner
8. Knowledge of Subject Matter Competencies	O	17, 23	Florida-adopted Subject Area NCATE Constituents (NPOs) Sunshine State Standards Subject Matter Content Standards for FL Teachers INTASC CS P1, P7 Reflective Practitioner
9. Learning Environments	I, K, L, N	3, 7, 8, 14, 16, 20, 22, 23	INTASC CS P3, P4, P5, P7 Reflective Practitioner
10. Planning	D, F, H, I	10, 11, 12, 13	INTASC CS P4, P7 Reflective Practitioner
11. Role of the Teacher	J, K, L, M, P	4, 5, 6, 26	INTASC CS P7, P10 Reflective Practitioner
12. Technology Education Technology Standards	G	27	NCATE/ISTE National INTASC CS P6 Reflective Practitioner

NOTE: Underlining indicates correlations identified in a similar crosswalk prepared by the Florida Education Standards Commission.

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